

*KACHINAS
IN THE
PUEBLO
WORLD*

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The Hopi Cosmology or World-View

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PUEBLO cosmology in general emphasizes the earth rather than the heavens, and begins with the emergence of people from the underworld rather than with the creation of the world. The Hopi Indians share this emphasis and their cosmology provides for the evolution of mankind in four worlds, with final emergence of the Hopi (and all other known peoples including the whites) in the Grand Canyon, by way of the *sipapu* or opening from the underworld below. Life in the underworlds was crowded and difficult, and periodically the leaders led their followers through openings in the ceilings of each cave world, leaving behind troublemakers and witches in an attempt to maintain Hopi teachings. With their emergence into the Grand Canyon near the mouth of the Little Colorado River, the Hopi chief thought they had succeeded, but when his child died he knew that at least one witch had emerged with the rest. When the witch was discovered she saved her own life by showing the chief and his followers that his child was alive in the underworld and playing happily with other children. The Hopi believe that their dead return to the underworld, where they live in villages in the manner of the living, and have a continuing role in Hopi life (Quinn 1983; Voth 1905).

The Hopi do provide a brief account of the creation of the physical world in which the Sky

lar deities who are impersonated in the ceremonial system and to whom offerings are periodically made. Thus there are shrines to Masau, the deity of the surface of the earth who owns the land and is also the God of Death, near each village, as well as near his "real" home in the Grand Canyon. The Tribal Initiation, itself, dramatizes the emergence from the underworld through the *sipapu*, with each of the constituent societies playing particular roles. On the night of initiation the spirits of the dead are invited to return to the village and Masau is impersonated by the chief of the Kwan society. The novices, who are "little chicken hawks," are apparently "killed" and revived as "men" in the presence of the spirits of the dead, who will thus recognize them when they in turn reach the land of the dead. The Kwan and Ahl societies kindle new fire in the kivas after all the fires in the village are extinguished, in recognition of Masau's ownership of fire, and jointly patrol the village to insure that no intruders enter the village and that the Hopi remain in their houses while the dead are present. The Wuwutsim and Tao societies dance through the village periodically, the Wuwutsim carrying emblems of fertility and taunting the Hopi women, and the Tao singing the songs that were used when the Hopi emerged from the *sipapu*.

When a child dies its spirit or "breath body" does not go to the underworld, but returns to the household of its mother where it resides in the roof and is reborn in the mother's next child. The Wuwutsim initiates go to the general underworld and to the homes of the katsinas in the San Francisco Peaks or the spring at Kisiwu. Deceased Kwan members have a special home at Kwanivi, a small mountain near the Grand Canyon, while Ahl members go to a lake in the San Francisco Peaks known as Alosaka, and the Singers have a home at Dowanasavi, the center of the earth with a shrine south of Oraibi (Titiev 1944:136, n. 48).

Initiation into the man's societies automatically provides for entry into the Soyal ceremony,

which occurs at the winter solstice and sets the stage for the new ceremonial year. The kivas are opened by the Soyal katsina, who is impersonated by the village chief and head of the Bear clan, and the main chiefs or priests of the village are involved. The sun is started back on his path toward his summer home by Sotuknangu, the Star or Sky God, impersonated by a Sun clan leader twirling a sun shield, and prayer offerings are made for relatives and friends, for plants and animals, and for known ancestors and placed on shrines nearby. The dead have been invited to come and share the offerings and food. The first katsinas also come at this time and inaugurate the season of katsina dances which continue at intervals until the Niman, or "home going" in July, when other societies take over the task of providing rain for the crops.

Throughout the year offerings may be made to the springs and other sources of water. Springs are sacred, being inhabited by water serpents who are mythical creatures quite separate from the ordinary snakes. The earth is thought to rest on two gigantic water serpents, or palölökong, who may punish the Hopis by turning over and thus causing earthquakes, or by causing floods or other disasters. In tradition a village chief might have to sacrifice a son or daughter to appease them.

The exterior boundaries of the Hopi domain are likewise marked by a series of shrines that the Hopi elders now revisit every year. There are eight major shrines, marked in part by spirals or concentric petroglyphs and buried prayer offerings at locations of importance to the Hopi. In general the eight shrines mark the last staging areas in the final migrations to the Hopi homeland.

Hopi religion is central to their life and for centuries has involved their land. The Hopi have no word for "religion" as such, because for them all aspects of their life have a sacred quality. Relatively isolated on their mesas for centuries, they have integrated their subsistence practices, their land base, their social organization, and their cosmology into one interdependent whole.